

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

0/0-73-0738/2

SECRET

May 22, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR WILLIAM COLBY

FROM: A. W. MARSHALL *A*

Attached are two pieces. The first is a follow-up to my phone call of a few days ago. The second is a piece I have written for my own records that tries to describe the fuller background of the NSCIC Working Group recommendations based on the three studies of intelligence performance during period of crises, Indo-Pak, etc. I think that you might find the material interesting and useful to read before responding to the Working Group recommendations.

SECRET - GDS

NSC review(s) completed.

SECRET

May 21, 1973

MEMORANDUM TO WILLIAM COLBY

FROM: A. W. MARSHALL *AWM*

SUBJECT: Areas for Discussion

Following are some areas that I suggest that we might discuss the next time we meet:

1. The Role of the NSCIC and its Working Group. The Working Group has done some useful work in studying the past performance of the intelligence community and ought to continue the work, although I believe it should focus more attention on the quality of the product. But the area where it has never succeeded in even getting started is that of supporting the NSCIC in carrying out its designated task of giving guidance to the intelligence community on the substantive intelligence needs of the top level policy process.

There are two ways that I believe it can do this effectively. First, it can review the Planning Guidance to provide comment on its assumptions as to the major policy problems, and to add any additional insights and views of its own. Second, it would be useful for the Working Group to describe perhaps a half dozen or so of the major issue areas of high priority interest to the top level decisionmakers. This would not be an attempt to do an exhaustive job, but simply to pick out a few of the key areas and supply the community with an improved understanding of the reason why a particular area is important and the specific kinds of questions or issues to which it would be desirable to have the answers. The terms of reference for each issue would set a deadline for response; the community's reply could be reviewed by the NSCIC prior to or concurrent with the product being sent to consumers.

2. Product Improvement Initiatives. I believe a useful tactic would be to pick a few product types, or substantive areas, and put a substantial effort into upgrading the capability to supply first rate intelligence products.

SECRET - GDS

SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/03/09 : CIA-RDP80M01133A000800110004-5

2

As candidate areas I suggest the following:

- The personality and behavior of key foreign leaders or foreign elite groups.
- Development of wrap-up products for critical areas (e. g., Middle East, Soviet Union, China).
- Presentation of products containing conflicting viewpoints.
- Improved treatment and communication of uncertainty from analysts to consumers.

25X1

I have undertaken efforts to have experimental products produced in two of these four areas, but more effort should be put into experimental products and new ways of organizing the efforts to produce them need to be discussed.

I talked to Jim Schlesinger some while ago, and urged him to put together some teams or task forces and to assign them the problem of producing better products in areas such as those listed above. This seems like a good way of harnessing resources and a mechanism whereby a better interface with expertise and knowledge on the outside might be brought to bear. For example, teams might include non-Agency people as consultants or as full time but temporary participants. Not only might you get some interesting new products, but there is likely to be a special value to having a few concrete examples of the kinds of products you would like to be producing regularly in order to provide analysts with examples to copy and excellence of analysis to emulate.

SECRET

Approved For Release 2007/03/09 : CIA-RDP80M01133A000800110004-5

SECRET

3

3. Further Research on Top Level Consumer Needs. I plan to do additional interviewing of the NSC staff in order to dig a little deeper as to what kinds of intelligence products they would really like to have. My current idea is to take up several of the fairly persistently mentioned types of products they would like to see produced and see if one cannot elicit still more concrete specifications as to the nature of these products. For example, in earlier interviews almost uniformly people indicated they wanted more periodic wrapups of a somewhat different kind that would serve to supply a context and an antidote to the biases of the day to day current reporting. There also was persistent desire for more in-depth analysis, including better biographic, personality and elite studies in some areas of the world.

Another aspect of consumer research that I would like to talk with you about is my belief that it is especially important that intelligence use the best and least intrusive means of interrogating top level consumers and their staffs in attempting to ascertain more about their desires and needs. Special care has to be taken with the design of questionnaires, with interviewing techniques, etc. I believe it would be worthwhile to survey in more detail than I think anyone has done what outside experts may know about appropriate techniques and methods. I have in mind people from the consumer research organizations that are appendages to Madison Avenue. Also, some experimental products should be developed and tested with consumers for their reactions.

4. The Role of Intelligence. A wide variety of opinion exists both inside and outside intelligence concerning the tasks of intelligence. For example, do the agencies provide raw data or intelligence, who are their consumers, and what contributions do they and can they make to the top level decision process? I do not presume to know the correct definition of intelligence's roles, but I think top level managers should get together to discuss the issue with consumers and perhaps consultants. Fundamentally, a relatively firm knowledge of what the tasks are is essential to reorganizing and directing the community in the long term. Useful discussions which are acted upon in reorganizing elements, setting new procedures, and altering training and other functions can help in achieving a unity of effort among the agencies.

5. The Personnel System, Consultants, Etc. Related to the issue of the Agency's roles or tasks are problems in personnel management, training, use of outside experts, etc. I have been concerned that there is a

SECRET

SECRET

4

tendency (or has been a tendency) to recruit people with the intention that they have life-long careers in the Agency. This has lead to the situation of relatively limited lateral entry at middle and higher levels in most parts of the Agency. Another aspect of the policy (especially in the DDI) has been the limited use of outside consultants, the use of panels, boards, etc. This has meant in some areas a significant falling behind developments in some areas extremely relevant to intelligence analysis. There also may be problems of recruiting the best people into the Agency. Hence, contracting and consultants may be a better way of harnessing the capabilities of the country to solve intelligence problems than doing them in-house. I believe the Agency should view itself primarily as a mechanism for harnessing the best talents in the whole country. The question to be asked of any product is this the absolute best this country can produce, not is this absolutely the best that can be produced with the people that we happen to have hired and now have on board.

Finally, let me mention my belief that on the IC staff there should be an element composed of people with a Harvard Business School type background who would focus on major persistent management problems of the Agency and the community as a whole. That is they would address issues such as the one discussed above, that is basic policy toward the personnel, the interface with the outside world, contracting, etc. I believe this is the best way to get some focus of attention on major management problems and to recruit and hold a small corps of high quality management oriented people.

SECRET